G. Thompson
Orville Dewey

Boston, Massachusetts, Feb. 3d. 1857.

My dear Sir,

Two of the very best hours of this evening – the whole of which I had set aside for letters to my Bristol friends – have been ruthlessly snatched from me by "Company". It will make less worthy than I had hoped – at the best not worthy of much consideration – the letter I am writing. – I have just finished a letter to Miss Esther, covering over the four sides of the sheet pretty thoroughly, and this, if you please, may be considered as in continuation.

By the Annual Box, which we are making up & must close tomorrow, I send you a pamphlet or two, with the "American Almanac", which I hope may prove of some use to you. I shall put in a few copies of the last number of the "Liberator", containing a very good Report of Sayings & Doings at a Soiree, given in honour of the completion of the 20th year of said paper. The suggestion first came from George Thompson, and was most warmly taken up. And a very pleasant time we had of it. Poor Mr. Thompson literally crept from his sick room at Hingham (15 miles distant), and came up to town to attend it, though his physician said he should keep house at least 3 days longer. He has been almost worn out by his labours. Applications, almost as thick as the leaves of Vallambrosa, have showered upon him, and he has not had the heart, or the resolution, to say Nay, many times when he ought to have said it, and adhered to it. The

result is, in our phrase, he is almost <u>used up</u>; and I think will have to expedite his return home, to rest and recruit himself. His labours here have been exceedingly acceptable – his meetings thronged every where – he has been very plain, open, bold – and has done us a great service. His heart appears to be truly and deeply <u>in</u> the Anti-slavery cause. – I am glad to learn that his English friends purpose a testimonial, in pecuniary form, to him. Undoubtedly, he is quite destitute of this world's goods. I suppose he will take hence with him a moderate sum; I am quite unable to say what it will be. Wendell Phillips has arranged the most of his meetings, prescribe the conditions, and been his <u>banker</u>. His lectures in this city, on British India & Reforms in Gt. Britain, after meeting all expenses, gave him about $200; – a small sum to be sure; but <u>very well</u>, when you know that the lecturing <u>mania</u>, a few years since very strong here, has grown quite cold, and that G. P. R. James, the popular novelist, at his lectures in Boston, cleared (as we were informed) but $40., over expenses – and Mr. William Ware, with a very interesting course on Italy, was compelled to break them off unfinished, or involve himself in debt. Mr. T. has given these lectures, or a portion of them, in a number of other towns, as well as attended numerous a. s. meetings, frequently speaking every night in the week. I think he was not very well when he arrived here; he creates an artificial strength, for these efforts, by drinking a great deal, & frequently, of very strong Coffee and tea. He perspires very freely during his addresses – & this must tend to weaken him. – He has <u>won upon us</u>, greatly, by his good nature,

bonhomie, pleasant, familiar address, as well as by his great talent, and noble devotion of it to the service of those, who are too weak, degraded, & wronged even to be able to repay him, or even understand the magnitude & worth of the service he renders them.

Among the papers I send you is one containing a very brief report of a lecture, delivered here in December by Orville Dewey – that shameful poltroon, and foul disgrace to the name and place he dares to take, of a Minister of the Gospel. This is the strongest language I have ever used of him, but, in my best judgment & growing conviction, not one whit too strong. He went out of his way, and transgressed the standing rules of the Society to which he was speaking, by introducing a topic of political controversy, & that topic must needs be the "Fugitive Slave Law"! We must not resist that law, he said; we must not endanger the Union. Rather than put that at hazard, he would send back his own mother into slavery – he would send his son – he would go himself into slavery. But, he added, there were things we must not do, even to save the Union!! One was, to tell a lie! Another, to deny God!! Didn't he do both, when he said he would send his mother into slavery, on any conditions, or go himself? It is charitable to him, to suppose that he told an unmitigated lie; for if he did not, he must be a blackhearted wretch enough, fit only to serve a pirate on the high-seas, or a slave driver on a Southern plantation, – or league himself with apostates like Daniel Webster and Moses Stuart, who are striving to cast down God, and exalt the Demon of Slavery into his place. The above statement of Dr. Dewey's lecture, I am assured by hearers, is correct. It has been repeatedly so

represented in the public journals and in speeches in open meetings – and stand uncontradicted. I hope ~~you~~ that the British ~~Unitarian~~ Unitarians will, individually & collectively, take some notice, such as it deserves, of this vile conduct of Dr. (!) Dewey. He will feel the smart of English censure, and he richly deserves the severest punishment. It is conjectured by some, that, having taken himself out of the settled ministry, he means to follow the lead of so many other ex-parsons, and betake himself to political life. He has all the vanity needful to make him think himself all ready for any office. Of course, I know nothing of his intentions; but I thought the suggestion, when made to me by an Unitarian minister, a very probable one.

You will see that, at our Annual Meeting, a resolution was passed in fitting condemnation of the recreant and base men who have been using their priestly office & influence to crowd the Fugitive Slave Law down ~~the~~ the throats of Northern men. The names of prominent "evangelical" men (& others) are given. What will the British & Foreign Ant. Society do now? Will it speak of those men as they deserve? or will it observe a cautious silence? They ~~are~~ will be as recreant as those vile priests, if they do not unmask them, and rebuke them once, & again, & again, and give no peace to those wicked servants. Have they said anything of Moses Stuart? Will they say anything of Dr. Spring, Dr. Cox, Dr. Haven, Dr. Sharp, and a host of smaller fry, who go for the F. Law, and its most rapid enforcement? But I must stop. Be assured, my dear Sir, in spite of this hurried letter, I think of you often and with deep respect & gratitude – I admire the constancy & fortitude, with which, in the midst of illness & weakness, you pursue your labors in the slave's behalf. —

May God keep you and give you health, if it please Him, and if not that, which neither sickness nor death can take from you – the unity of the spirit, & consciousness of the Fatherhood, & Christ's love, & sympathy, & sacrifice for us.

MS. B. 1.6 v. 14 p. 25